

## VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

# PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT



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## Project Kit

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## Getting Started: Finding Partners and Locating Resources

1. **Find a veteran to interview:** Everyone knows a war veteran or someone who served in support of veterans. Start by explaining your objective to your family, friends, and coworkers. The remaining veterans of World War I are our most immediate priority. If you know of any in your community, we urge you to contact them through their families, friends, or clergy as soon as possible. You can also contact veterans of all wars through the many veterans organizations active in your state, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), AMVETS, and Disabled American Veterans (DAV), as well as other organizations such as the Japanese American Veterans Association, Jewish War Veterans, Military Chaplains Association, The Retired Enlisted Association, and the Women Airforce Pilots of WWII. Work with the volunteer service arm of your nearby U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility, or contact your state department of veterans affairs. Information about many veterans service organizations and state veterans affairs offices may be found on the [Department of Veterans Affairs: Partners, Veterans Organizations, and Vendors](#) Web site.
2. **Find a civilian to interview:** Many civilians worked in support of the U.S. armed forces during wartime. Some civilians may feel their accounts are not of interest, but their contributions to the nation's war efforts are an important part of the story. These civilians include men and women who worked in war-related industries, held technical support jobs, or volunteered their services in numerous ways. Civilian activities varied depending on the war. Some examples include people employed in the defense industry building planes or weapons; civilians who worked on military bases in the United States or overseas; Red Cross workers and other civilian medical personnel; and home front volunteers active in civil defense work and health services. These are just a few examples. You probably know of civilians who contributed in other meaningful ways.
3. **Contact one of our Official Partners in your state:** If there is an organization or institution that is an Official Partner of the Veterans History Project in your state, you can contact them and volunteer to assist them in the creation of their oral history project and collection. A list of our Official Partners is available on our Web site.
4. **Partner with your local library:** Meet with a librarian and propose that he or she develop a project to create and preserve within your community a local collection of veterans oral histories as part of the National Veterans History Collection coordinated by the Library of Congress and the American Folklife Center.
5. **Partner with your local high school:** Meet with the school principal, a history or journalism teacher, or a media instructor to encourage students to become Official Youth Partners of the Veterans History Project. As such, they will be part of our Volunteer Corps who will interview veterans and collect documents for the project. Also, high school and college audiovisual departments may be willing to loan recording equipment or set aside space in their recording laboratories for your use.
6. **Partner with local businesses:** A local business may be willing to provide money to pay for recording tapes, batteries, photoduplication, and other small expenses that your project may incur. Video rental stores, camera shops, and electronics stores may be willing to donate or loan an audio recorder or video camera. Your public access television station may lend space, equipment, and technical know-how.
7. **Visit with your newspaper and radio managers:** Not only can local newspapers and radio stations spread the word about

your project, they may be interested in using the interviews you assemble for articles and public programming. Local television and radio stations may also be willing to loan or donate recording equipment to your project.

8. **Contact your state arts or humanities councils:** State arts councils and humanities councils may be able to provide small grants in support of your project. Within many arts councils are folk arts programs coordinated by a folklorist who can give valuable advice and encouragement. [\*The Folklife Sourcebook: A Directory of Folklife Resources in the United States\*](#), maintained by the American Folklife Center, contains a listing of state public folklife programs. State humanities councils can identify historians and oral historians who can advise you on how to conduct interviews and how to research military and domestic wartime history.

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